



tips for youth workers

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TAKING C.A.R.E.

Every once in a while it's a good idea to pull little books off our bookshelves to discover what they have to say and whether they have any words of wisdom that can help us with our ministry. Here are some tidbits that I picked up from a little book entitled, *Help! I'm a Sunday School Teacher!* by Ray Johnston, Youth Specialties (ISBN 0310209196). Perhaps these words will remind us all to take C.A.R.E. when planning for our ministries with children and youth.

C – CONTENT: When I was growing up the most important part of a lesson was learning the facts. It was important that we knew the Bible story and all the facts surrounding it. Unfortunately this can be quite boring for the young people and for teachers too. Learning is a process and we need to focus on four components. The first one is *Content*. We need to decide what we are going to be teaching to our young people. Is the content from our curriculum? Is it based on something the kids need to hear? Or something the parents want them to learn? Or is it based on something you heard somewhere? By choosing to provide our young people with good Biblical content we will be helping them discover what they believe and why. By asking yourself what content you want to communicate, you will be able to focus your aim and help your students to **know**, **feel** and **do** at the end of the lesson.

A – ACTION: I think all of us will admit that the lessons we learned best from were the lessons where we did something instead of just listening. By acting out a story, debating or by having a lesson on homelessness outside in the cold, we plant the content of the lesson more firmly in our students' minds. There are so many resources available to us today to help make our lesson times with kids come alive. Curriculum has also moved forward since I was a kid and provides many active learning options for our kids. Need ideas? Contact us for suggestions at christian_education_orderdesk@can.salvationarmy.org or check out www.salvationists.ca/helps.

R – RELATIONSHIPS: Would you be surprised to hear that those who visit our programs and do not make friendships will not return? This theory applies to all ages. When planning a fun event for young people their number one question is "Who else is going?" It will be rare to hear "What are the topics of the sessions being offered?" To help with this, class time can always begin with icebreaker activities, team building activities can be used to help teach content, young people can be given "friendship roles" of welcoming visitors, being buddies for the day, sending "Miss You" cards and so on. By helping our kids connect with each other we are helping them to obey Jesus' command to "Love each other as I have loved you." (John 15:12)

E – EXPERIENCE: Our goal in working with young people is to get the truth on the inside. We start this process by thinking through how our content can help our kids. We ask ourselves, "What do I want my kids to know, feel and do?" and "How can they experience these truths in their everyday lives?" Next we give our students opportunities to apply what they have learned. We challenge them through questions and activities to think about how they can use this truth in their everyday life, and how will this truth affect or change their lives. The important thing is not just that the kids have learned the truth, but how their lives will be different because of what they have learned.